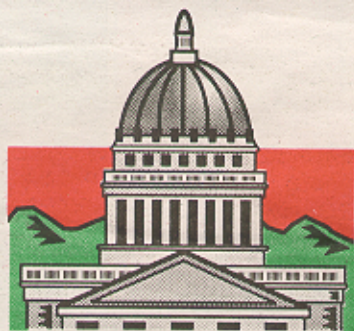


Capitol Connections



NEWS FOR AND ABOUT PEOPLE IN STATE GOVERNMENT

Fleet feats ... Clean Cities awards Utah with vehicle

By Alison Taylor
Division of Fleet Operations
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Administrative Services

As people gathered recently on the front steps of the Capitol, enjoying the crisp, bright autumn morning, it was hard to imagine the need for a Clean Cities Program in Salt Lake City. However, Salt Lake City Mayor Deedee Corradini spoke of the ominous "brown cloud" of smog that settles in the valley every winter, and stated that among the pollutants found in the Wasatch Front area, the most common is vehicle exhaust. The American Lung Association believes that more than 50 deaths could be prevented annually, along the Wasatch Front, if vehicle emissions were significantly reduced. This is one of many reasons why the state of Utah Division of Fleet Operations (DFO) has joined with the Clean Cities Coalition to encourage the use of Alternative Fuels in Salt Lake City and the surrounding areas.

Ford Motor Company and Ken Garff Honda each donated a vehicle in an effort to heighten public awareness of Alternative Fuels Vehicles (AFVs) and demonstrate the



Gary Winslow, Ford Motor Company, Steve Saltzgeber, Director of Fleet Operations, Lt. Governor Olene Walker, Margaret Haacke and Jeff Done accept vehicle

convenience of using an AFV. The vehicles are to be used for six months, by the Associate Director of the American Lung Association Craig Cutright and the Governor's office.

Along with the keys to a 1998 dedicated natural gas Ford Expedition, Lt. Governor Olene Walker, who rep-

received a book with listings of the AFV refueling sites and repair locations throughout the state, along with a state map and a refueling card. The Fuel Network, which is a program under the supervision of Fleet Operations, provided the book.

According to DFO Fuel Network

FLEET FEATS

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Manager Jeff Done Utah's refueling infrastructure is fourth in the nation among those states offering Alternative Fuel Sites. Fleet Operations has partnered with local, city and county governments and the private sector to increase access to AFV refueling sites.

It is this commitment to the expanded use of AFVs along the Wasatch Front, and throughout the state, which has allowed DFO to purchase more than the federally mandated amount of dedicated natural gas and bi-fuel vehicles for use in the state fleet. As an added incentive, the Motor Pool, also under the Division of Fleet Operations, offers a 20-cent per gallon rebate for drivers with a full-service lease through the state, and who use alternative fuels. During the first three months of the program more than \$12,000 in rebates were issued statewide.

"We hope that once people conquer their initial safety and refueling fears, they will drive the AFVs," said DFO Motor Pool Operations Manager David Rees. "And, we felt that money would be an effective tool to encourage people to try one of the AFVs offered through the state fleet."

The Capitol Shuttle has been running on dedicated natural gas vehicles since January 1998. According to Shuttle Driver Ed Heath, the AFVs are very efficient and environmentally sound; the only difference in operating the two vehicle types is the refueling process. Rather than pouring a liquid into the tank, the natural gas is compressed into the tank through a

specially equipped nozzle. "It takes a little longer, but not much," said Heath.

The extra time can help reduce the amount of Carbon Monoxide (CO) found in the air you breathe. CO is listed as the number one pollutant on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's list of the Six Major Air Pollutants. In a 1996 study, it was found that 79 percent of the air pollutants were carbon monoxide and 47 percent of the CO detected came from vehicle emissions. High levels of CO can reduce your resistance to such illnesses as influenza and bronchitis. It can lower the ability of blood to carry oxygen to the brain and heart, and can even affect the health of unborn children.

"When I go to the Clean Cities presentations, I am proud that the Division of Fleet Operations is involved," said DFO Assistant Director Margaret Haacke. "The additional cost for an AFV becomes a non-issue when compared to improving the environment."

Although the average purchase price for an Alternative Fuel Vehicle is \$4,500 more than an unleaded fuel vehicle, refueling and maintenance costs are lower. Other types of alternative fuels include propane, electric and ethanol gas. All are available for purchase in the Salt Lake area.

It is the goal of the Division of Fleet Operations to get every employee of the state behind the wheel of an Alternative Fuel Vehicle, first at work, then at home. With a little time, education and the help of the Clean Cities Coalition, every day will be a bright crisp day. Then the residents of the Wasatch Front would not have to breathe a "brown cloud" anymore.

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